

Pinnacle Midlands Health Network (PMHN)

Interview with Sally Newell, Nurse Lead Clinical Governance: Programme, Lead Long Term Conditions

Summary

This case study describes a collaborative pilot project for patients with pre diabetes.

Background

BetaMe is a self-management programme based on NZ and international best practice guidelines to address the 20% (and rising) number of New Zealanders with pre-diabetes.

The objective of the programme is to work with patients and improve their ability to self manage their health, by participating in a 28 week programme (16 week active and then 12 weeks maintenance) delivered through a mobile application.

The programme is first being run as a 16 week pilot. The aim of this pilot is to determine whether the use of a mobile application for coaching, peer and clinical support, tracking and personalised intervention results in improved self-efficacy, control of blood glucose and weight loss in patients with pre-diabetes.

This pilot is run as a collaboration between Melon Health and Midlands Health Network with coaching support from Sport Waikato. The pilot is being independently evaluated by the Obesity and Endocrinology Department at The Mayo Clinic.

What is BetaMe

BetaMe has been developed by Melon Health™ as a 28 week, patient-centred digital chronic disease prevention programme for individuals with pre-diabetes. Originally developed as a smart phone app, **BetaMe** is now available on PCs and tablets. The programme is cloud based so people can download content anywhere Wi-Fi is available and engage with the content when it suits them. People with pre-diabetes are referred by their practice team to the **BetaMe** service. Melon Health recruits participants and manages the clinical support (including moderating peer support function,) and health coaching functions.

BetaMe supports key lifestyle and behaviour changes around diet, activity and emotional wellness that are engaging, meaningful and realistic to the person, as well as the person's family.

Components of the BetaMe programme include:

- Completion of Patient Activation Measure survey at the start to inform health coaches
- Peer Support - safe secure online community where people can connect with, support and learn from one another. The online community is managed by a trained staff member (see Health Coaches below)
- Clinical Support - access to nurses through the Melon platform using real-time messaging, video or audio scheduling and meetings

- Health Coaches - experienced coaches (and community manager) trained in psychological behaviour change techniques such as CBT, mindfulness and motivational interviewing
- Behaviour change interventions, education and engagement tools (nudges, reminders, intrinsic rewards)
- Self tracking - exercise, food diary and happiness scale. Patients are encouraged to track these daily but this is not mandatory.
- Primary Care integration. Ability to integrate with computer patient management systems therefore sharing information with primary care. And the patient is referred to the programme by their general practice and the practice remains responsible for the patient and linked into any relevant information

Challenges

1. Buy in from practices who thought that they were going to get more phone calls and visits from people on the programme. In fact health providers reported improved interactions with people on the programme.
2. Getting the Health Coach concept accepted by health providers. Practice staff now more accepting since receiving positive feedback from people and seeing the changes in clinical outcomes.
3. Enrolling people in a timely manner. Initially when the programme started, there was long run in period of recruiting people. Everybody was started on the same day. This led to a lot of drop out because people had gone off the idea, moved etc. Now they start people on the Monday following the day they sign up for the programme.
4. Developing the health coaching role as the programme is rolled out across the network. Currently exploring developing the role of kaiawhina as a staff group who can be upskilled in coaching techniques. Previously melon health provided coaches
5. Funding the roll out Currently investigating ways of rolling this programme into business as usual via a partnership model.

Learnings/outcomes

The peer support function works very well as a form of social networking. People enrolled on the programme can remain on the social networking site for any length of time linked with other participants regardless of geographical location.

Flexible support package. Originally the programme structure included weekly sessions with the health coach. Most people didn't want that level of commitment and so **BetaMe** now has a more flexible arrangement to suit each individual. People enrolled on the programme also get a weekly newsletter as part of the support package. The newsletters are emailed, weekly for the active 16 week section, fortnightly for ever after. Even beyond the 12 week maintenance. These are continually updated and refreshed

Summary of Results of first 70 patients at completion of 16 week core programme

Measure/indicator	% of participants who achieved improvement in indicators/measures
HbA1C	91% reduced HbA1C
Weight	94% lost weight
BMI	94% reduced BMI
Waist circumference	87% reduced waist circumference
Pre-diabetes status	78% no longer have prediabetes (in the official HbA1C pre-diabetes range)
Blood pressure	59% of patients now have normal blood pressure

General information on BetaMe here including a short video www.betame.io